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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
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SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria/Qatar, Qatar/Lebanon,
Syria/Iran, Lebanon/Israel (8/22)

11. Summary: Syrian papers today reported the working visit to Damascus by Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, and his meeting with President Asad, which focused on the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and its repercussions, the current Arab position, the situation in the Palestinian territories and Iraq, and bilateral relations. Viewpoints over those issues were identical. Both leaders agreed to continue consultations and coordination between the two sisterly countries.

Syrian papers also featured the press conference held jointly by Lebanese president Emile Lahoud and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani just after their meeting in Beirut. The Emir praised the Lebanese people and the Resistance "which has realized the first Arab victory over Israel for many years." Sheikh Hamad criticized calls to disarm Hezbollah while Israel is receiving weapons, saying "we stand by every country that wants to defend its land, but to prevent Hezbollah from getting weapons while Israel is arming itself more and more is definitely unacceptable." He called upon Israel to implement UNSC Resolution 1701 and stop its continuous violations of Lebanese sovereignty. For his part, Lahoud expressed appreciation for Qatar's stance in support of Lebanon during its crisis, pointing out the Qatari efforts in the Security Council to improve the resolution, which neither met Lebanese ambitions nor reflected the events of the war or the victory of the Resistance. The Lebanese President confirmed that Lebanon will demand compensation from Israel for all damage to the Lebanese infrastructure during the Israeli aggression. On Syrian-Iranian relations, papers cited a statement by Syrian Grand Mufti Sheikh Ahmad Badr al-Din Hassoun, who participated in the 19th International Conference of Islamic Unity in Tehran. Hassoun said that "the victory of the Lebanese Resistance has been achieved by the strong will of the Lebanese people." "Features of a new Middle East have begun to appear after this victory; a Middle East that was launched by the will of nations not through the policy of repression," Sheikh Hassoun added during a meeting with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Supreme Council of the Iranian Islamic Revolution. Mufti Hassoun added that "Lebanon has achieved a miracle by fighting the

Zionist aggression. The positive situation brought about by the victory of the resistance has reflected on the whole Islamic nation." He called on all Muslims to leave disputes aside and unite in facing challenges that target Islamic unity.
End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"President Asad and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad discuss the aggression against Lebanon and the situation in Iraq and the Palestinian territories. Identical points of view and agreement on continuing consultations" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/22)

"Sheikh Hamad from Beirut: Points of views were identical, and I carried an invitation to the Lebanese Prime Minister to visit Damascus.... Had the oil weapon been used during the aggression it would have served Lebanon's interest. The Resistance victory is the first victory for Arabs in years" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/22)

President Asad sends a message of condolences to President Mubarak on the victims of train crash" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/22)

"Information Minister Bilal: Syria works for Arab solidarity and her stances are firm regarding peace" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/22)

"At least 4 US soldiers killed in Baghdad and al-Anbar. An Iraqi child killed by the American army" (Government-owned Tishreen 8/22)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"A Scheme of Sedition"

Muhammad Khayr al-Jammali, a columnist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/22): "Israel, the United States, and their aides in Lebanon are working to stir up domestic strife in Lebanon in an attempt to render the historic and strategic victory that the Lebanese Resistance achieved void of its military, political, and strategic content. Each of the three parties has its own objective. While Israel's objective is to restore some of its lost deterrent power and military prestige, the American objective is to prevent forces of resistance and opposition in the region from turning the military victory into a political victory, as this would foil all American plans for the region.

"As for those assisting the United States and Israel in the region, their objective is to come out of the difficult situation they found themselves in as a result of the victory of the Resistance....

"These aides are plotting against this victory through incitement against the Resistance and Syria and the promotion of false accusations against them to distort the national role of the Resistance and the pan-Arab role of Syria in supporting this Resistance....

"What is being concocted against Lebanon now is a major and serious plan of sedition to create a deep rift between the people and the Resistance. The aim is to isolate, besiege, and harass the Resistance. They want to hide the suspicious role they played in the past and the role they are now playing to abort the results of the victory and turn them to the service of the revival of the Zionist-American scheme in the region, which has entered its death throes, from Iraq to Lebanon. But Lebanon's people and the Resistance, and with them Syria and the honorable forces in the region and the world, will not allow this scheme to achieve any of its objectives, just as they earlier foiled the plan to contain Lebanon and aborted its political and military instruments."

"They Are Preparing for New Rounds of Aggression"

Dr. Khalaf al-Jarrad, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/22): "There is ongoing criticism in Israel of the Israeli military and political leaders over their performance in Lebanon.... Arabs must not conclude that the extremist Israeli society will resign itself to the idea of defeat and turn into a moderate society supportive of peace and international legitimacy.... There are Israeli calls to resume war and pursue Hizbollah leaders.... It would therefore be a misjudgment to believe that heavily wounded Israel, which is used to swift and decisive victories, will abide by the newest Security Council resolution or respect the international will and implement its obligations under this resolution....

"We believe that the leadership of the Lebanese Resistance, which has great experience in the Zionist enemy's affairs, tactics, plots, treacheries, aggressive nature, and racist expansionist composition, will deprive Israel of the chance to take revenge and avenge the loss of the dignity of its army on the soil of South Lebanon. It will not enable the Zionist enemy to achieve what it failed to achieve with its planes, missiles, tanks, and warships....

"We expect Israel to violate the cease-fire through attacks against Hizbollah positions or attempts to assassinate or kidnap Hizbollah leaders. We also expect the countries that drafted UNSC Resolution 1701 to give conflicting interpretations in order to serve Israel's interests....

"As for the United States, it will not rest before the implementation of all previous resolutions, first of all

Resolution 1559, which seek to end every form of resistance against the Zionist occupation, isolate Lebanon from its Arab environment, dismantle the bonds of brotherhood and the intertwined and organic relations between Lebanon and Syria, and sow the seeds of infighting, civil war, and division along sectarian, denominational, and feudal lines in Lebanon.

"This serious situation demands Arab vigilance and readiness.... Arabs must return to the principles, bases, and conventions on which common Arab action was built over the past 60 years.... Arabs must not relinquish Arab solidarity, even if at a minimum level.... Israel must not be given the opportunity to single out the Arab countries one after the other, taking advantage of inter-Arab sensitivities and different views and positions...."

"The Real Test"

Omar Jaftali, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/22): "Lebanon, which emerged victorious thanks to its valiant resistance, has become a real power in the equation of the conflict with the enemy, able to confront the Israeli-American hegemonic plans....

"The Arab nation now feels that any true resistance can put an end to Israeli arrogance.... Israel now tastes the humiliation of defeat, while the United States earned nothing from the Israeli aggression against Lebanon other than the peoples' hatred for its policy....

"The war against Lebanon has proven that the will of nations is the decisive word in any real test. That is exactly what the national Lebanese Resistance has proven."

"Europe, the Silent Witness"

Charles Kamilah, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/22): "There are two possible reasons behind Europe's reluctance to commit troops to South Lebanon. First, Resolution 1701 did not end the aggression, so much as seek to shackle the Resistance and allow the aggression to continue without resistance...."

"The Israeli infiltration attempt in eastern Lebanon on August 19 clearly shows this flagrant bias towards the aggression by Resolution 1701.... Europe does not want its troops in South Lebanon to serve as a silent witness to Israel's violations, which will be condoned by the United States. The second reason is that Europe is tired of serving as a fire brigade and a charity fund for reconstructing what the American military machine destroys...."

"Aggression against Lebanon and Arab Responsibility"

Dr. Isa al-Shammas, an op-ed writer in government-owned Al-Ba'th, wrote (8/22): "The official Arab position toward the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and the Palestinians was terribly weak and indifferent...."

"Some Arabs live deep in their dreams, concerned only about their positions and not shocked by the massacres and bloody scenes that their Arab brothers are experiencing in Lebanon.... The Arab peoples were astonished and disgusted with the statements that some Arab leaders made against Lebanon and its valiant Resistance, which is defending the dignity of all Arabs and their right to exist vis-a-vis the Israeli-American plan in the Arab region...."

"We wonder why some Arab leaders are ignoring the sentiments of their peoples, which are becoming more inflammatory day after day and which will certainly reach a point that will burn the thrones of these leaders and those who stand behind them.... We wonder why Arabs are not severing all their relations with Israel or implementing the Arab League Charter and the common Arab defense pact...."

Corbin